

DFS QUARTERLY

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4th Annual DFS Summer Fire Safety Program

The 4th Annual DFS Summer Fire Safety Program took place from July 21-24, 2000. Approximately 125 campers from 62 fire departments across the state were able to learn about fire safety, the different types of jobs and careers that the fire service offers, and to experience positive adult relationships with the many DFS and fire department volunteers who staffed the program.

On Tuesday, July 21, the program was hosted by the Barnstable County Fire Training facility and the Cape and Islands Fire Chiefs' Association and the Cape and Islands Fire Prevention Association were our co-sponsors.

On Wednesday and Thursday, July 22 and 23, the program was held at the Stow Campus of the Department of Fire Services.

On Friday, July 24, the program was hosted by the Eastern States Exposition and held at the fire house on the "Big E" fairgrounds. The Western Mass. Fire Chiefs' Association and the Western Mass. Fire Prevention Association were our co-sponsors that day.

Campers left the DFS Summer Program with many valuable life lessons. The volunteers served as positive role models and encouraged interest in the issue of public safety as

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Campers practice exiting the second story bedroom window of the fire safety house then phoning the fire department for help.

Photo by Don Chase.



From the Desk of the Fire Marshal

Stephen D. Coan

The Governor and the Legislature approved a \$10 million safety bond bill that will provide grants to cities, towns and fire districts to purchase firefighter safety equipment. The bill created a five member board to recommend guidelines to the Secretary of Public Safety on what type of equipment will be eligible. The five members are the president of the Fire Chief's Association of Massachusetts, the president of the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts, the house and senate chairs of the Joint Committee on Public Safety, and the State Fire Marshal. Some examples of the type of equipment the board will be considering are thermal imaging cameras, personal alert safety systems (PASS devices), and protective clothing. The distribution formula and grant sizes are aspects of the program that will have to be decided as part of the application package. While the guidelines and the application process are being developed, fire departments can certainly engage in strategic planning to be ready to take advantage of this program.

As part of this program, \$200,000 has been earmarked for the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy to create a statewide program on firefighter survival. Extensive planning has already taken place, including a review of all current academy training programs and a survey of nationally

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From the Fire Marshal

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known experts. A combination of new seminars and existing training programs will be put into one package called *Firefighter Safety 2000 and Beyond*. As you read this issue of the *DFS Quarterly*, you will be starting to hear about this exciting initiative. In the next 18-24 months we hope that all firefighters in the state will take advantage of the firefighter safety training opportunities under the umbrella of the *Firefighter Safety 2000 and Beyond* campaign.

11th Annual Firefighter of the Year Heroic Awards

The 11th Annual Firefighter of the Year Heroic Awards ceremony will take place on Saturday, October 28, 2000. This statewide event honors the heroic deeds that occur every day in fire departments across the Commonwealth. This year's event will be held at Worcester's Mechanic's Hall in remembrance of the terrible fire that occurred in that city last December 3.

6th Year of S.A.F.E.

We are excited to be able to present the Student Awareness of Fire Education Program for the sixth consecutive year. The Governor and the Legislature have made \$1,078,666 in funding available again this year for a grant program to support the public education efforts of local fire departments. In the first five years of the program, we have identified 100 "young heroes" — children who have used the life safety lessons learned from firefighters in a real life emergency; proving time and again the public fire education works.

Update on Expansion of Stow Facility

We have received a preliminary architectural study on the proposed expansion of the Stow facility. I will be meeting with administration and legislative leaders this fall for further discussions this project. ♦

Symposium Catastrophe: Community Impact and Healing for Community Caregivers

The Worcester Institute on Loss and Trauma, in conjunction with the UMass Medical School, Department of Psychiatry and Youth Opportunities Upheld (Y.O.U.), Inc., will present a one day symposium on *Catastrophe: Community Impact and Healing for Community Caregivers, Mental Health Counselors, Nurses, Physicians, Social Workers and Emergency Response Personnel*, on Friday, October 20, 2000 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Beechwood Hotel, 363 Plantation Street, Worcester, Mass.

This all-day event will encompass speakers and workshops, featuring keynote speakers:

Howard F. Stein, PhD., of the Health Science Center, University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma City, OK. He will present "*Learning from Disaster: Comparative Perspective*"

Therese A. Rando, PhD., of the Institute for the Study & Treatment of Loss, Warwick, Rhode Island. She will present "*Treatment, Recovery, and Timetable for Healing*"

There will be an open forum with workshops throughout the day, culminating in a high tea and book signings by attending authors.

For more information on registration, programs or CEU's call (508) 849-5600 ext. 396. Or e-mail at: worc_instlosstrauma@mail.com ♦

Expo 2000

Society of Explosives Engineers New England Chapter will hold "Expo 2000" on Friday, October 20, 2000 from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Marlborough Holiday Inn, Route 20 at Route 495, Marlborough, Mass. For more information, call (978) 562-6211. ♦

Fire Officer Group News

The fall of 2000 will bring some exciting and long awaited changes for the Fire Officer Training Group.

First will be the introduction of the new *Fire Officer Supervisory Development* program. The new program was developed over the summer and will be presented as a pilot program in Stoughton beginning October 10. This course will consist of a ten-day highly interactive classroom session based on NFPA 1041 using the third edition of IFSTA Fire Department Company Officer Manual. We will also offer a stand alone practical/tactical operations segment later in the fiscal year. It is our goal to present six classroom sessions and three to four of the practical/tactical presentations this fiscal year.

The other change coming will be the ability to have control over all of the Fire Officer level training programs offered by the academy. This will be accomplished though the district delivery process established by MFA Administration. While the process for the customer will remain the same, it will allow the coordinator the ability to offer a more comprehensive action plan to meet the needs of the requesting fire chief. ♦

Burn Management Program for EMTs in Springfield

A Burn Management Program for EMTs will be held at Shriners Hospital for Children in Springfield on Thursday, October 5, 2000 from 7-9 p.m. The guest speaker will be Pat Lybarger, MSN, RN, C, of Shriners Burns Hospital – Boston. Contact hours for EMTs and RNs will be offered. There is no charge for this program, but participation will be limited to 50 people and registration closes on September 29, 2000. To register call or fax the Melha Shriners Office at 413-736-3647 (voice) or 413-731-9572 (fax). ♦

Hepatitis C Alert

Are you aware that firefighters, EMS personnel and other first responders are considered to be a high risk group for hepatitis C? The Philadelphia Fire Department tested all of its members to find that six percent had hepatitis C – three times more than the public at large.

Earlier this year, the Massachusetts Hepatitis C Coalition began with a mission of increasing the public's awareness of Hepatitis C – a blood-borne virus that has become a growing health threat. By mobilizing a grassroots effort to inform Massachusetts communities-at-risk, and the public in general, it can draw much needed attention to this disease. The coalition is funded by seed money from the Schering-Plough Corporation. Eventually the hope is to have a non-profit organization run the coalition.

National studies show that hepatitis C is four times more prevalent than the HIV virus. Despite the fact that this disease has become one of our country's most significant health risks, there is little information available to the public. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is doing an exemplary job – and has been a true leader among states – in dealing with hepatitis C. The coalition needs help from all factions of state agencies.

The Hepatitis C Coalition is pleased to have the Professional Fire Fighters of Massachusetts and the EMS Division of the Boston Police Patrolmen's Association as well as several other fire departments currently as members of the Coalition. For more information contact: Katherine Keough, Massachusetts Hepatitis C Coalition, 781-890-3435, ext. 227 or kkeough@icg-ps.com. ♦

Incinerator Alert!

Margaret Carson, Department of Environmental Management

Does your community have trash burning incinerators in use? Are you aware that the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) no longer allows them?

In the 1980's the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) identified and closed old, chute-fed trash incinerators. DEP air quality control requirements are very stringent, and they categorically prohibit the old incinerators. DEP regulations require that modern incinerators have thermocouplers, two burning chambers (which are batch fed), air pollution control technology such as carbon injection, controls for nitrogen oxides, an acid gas scrubber with a lime slurry, safety alarms, a trained operator and more. Therefore, the old chute-fed systems are not allowed. If you know of one of the old incinerators, please contact DEP's Business Compliance Division.

You can identify the old incinerators by their design deficiencies:

- Failure to burn waste in two separate combustion chambers;
- No effective temperature monitors for complete waste combustion;
- No waste feed regulators;
- Lack of adequate retention time;
- Lack of safety interlocks to prevent the unit from firing if the door is opened;
- Lack of air pollution control equipment and failure to capture pollutants before they reach the atmosphere.

Why did DEP choose to close these types of incinerators?

In the 60's and 70's, refuse and trash burning incinerators were common in municipal buildings, schools, and apartment buildings. They provided a

cost effective and convenient solution for trash disposal. Although the Department of Public Health or local fire department approved these incinerators in the past, they are now prohibited. In the 60's, the waste stream consisted mainly of paper and cardboard. These incinerators were not designed to burn plastics. Other household wastes have also become more common since that time. Wastes such as batteries, mercury containing fluorescent light bulbs and containers from household cleaners can pose serious risks to public health and the environment if they are burned.

There is no control over the amount of trash dropped through the chute. This results in incomplete burning, the generation of smoke, particulate matter and other potentially toxic pollutants.

Please call or write DEP with specific information regarding the operation of these outdated trash incinerators.

Contact information:

Business Compliance Division
DEP, 9th Floor
One Winter St.
Boston, MA 02108

Phone (617) 292-5500

Web site:
<http://www.dep.state.ma.us/dep> ♦

The **DFS Quarterly** is published every March, June, September, and December. If you have some newsworthy information to share with the fire service, you are welcome to submit articles to: Jennifer Mieth, Editor, DFS Quarterly, Dept. of Fire Services, P.O. Box 1025, Stow, MA 01775. (978) 567-3381 or Internet Address: Jennifer.Mieth@state.ma.us

The **DFS Quarterly** is published by the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services as a service to the fire service community.

Thank you to Judy O'Brien for keen-eyed proofreading and elegant rewording.

MFA Support Crew News

Richard Farrar, Support Services Manager

The most dramatic change that the support staff has seen is the start of the double recruit classes. The impact on all of the personnel here at the academy was huge. We all learned new things as each day passed. We were successful because of the cooperative efforts of all the people who work here; from the facilities people to the academy director, and from the instructor staff to the support branch. Starting September 18, double sessions will resume.

New Equipment

We acquired a new pump trailer that will be put into service as soon as training on it is completed. This trailer will be used, not only here at the academy to support the recruit program, but also in certain field programs, and possibly the maritime program at Barnstable.

We received a large assortment of nozzles and appliances from Akron, Elkhart, and Taskforce Tips. They will be placed on the engines for use in our programs.

We have upgraded much of the equipment used in rope rescue and confined space classes. Our new breathing air manifold for confined space includes new masks and escape packs. The number of harnesses and hardware pieces for rope rescue has been increased.

We purchased 30 new sets of turnout gear along with new hoods, helmets and boots. We need to maintain our personal safety record and proper gear is important.

Two of the goals for this year are the purchase of new breathing air compressors and two new trailers. The trailers would replace the ones now used for vehicle extrication and rope rescue. ♦

Licensing Exam Dates

The Office of the State Fire Marshal issues licenses to people and companies engaged in fireworks, blasting, explosives, cannon and mortar firing, special effects, special hazard

existing licenses may be obtained by contacting Joanne Melanson, at (978) 567-3700. Examinations for licenses are held quarterly.

All licensing exams will be given at the

<i>Exam Date</i>	<i>Type of License</i>
Tuesday, Sept. 12	Cannon, Fireworks and Special Effects
Monday, Oct 2	Fire Extinguishers
Tuesday, Oct 24	Blasting

systems and portable fire extinguishers. Information on applications and exam dates to obtain new licenses or to renew

Department of Fire Services, Stow campus in Room 502, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. ♦

Multi-Purpose Lighters Standards Take Effect December, 2000

Several Massachusetts fire departments have documented incidents where children under 5 were involved in fire play using multi-purpose lighters. They forwarded their documentation and concerns to State Fire Marshal Coan, who in turn shared the information with the National Association of State Fire Marshals (NASFM). Members of NASFM had similar experiences in their own states and have worked tirelessly to bring this issue before the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission.

Due to their efforts, new standards requiring multi-purpose lighters to be child resistant will take effect on

December 10, 2000. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission voted last December to require all multi-purpose lighters to be child resistant in addition to regular cigarette lighters to reduce the risk of injury and death associated with fires started by children under 5 playing with them.

Multi-purpose lighters are generally butane filled lighters commonly used to light charcoal and gas grills, pilot lights, camping stoves, candles and similar objects. They are also commonly referred to as utility lighters, grill lighters, fireplace lighters, micro-torches or gas matches. ♦

Regulation Changes to 527 CMR by the Board of Fire Prevention

The Board of Fire Prevention Regulations has recently made changes to 527 CMR 5.00 and 13.00.

The first amendment, effective 7/21/00, amended 527 CMR 5.00 by adding a new definition, "Vertical Barrier", to section 5.02 and amending the language in subsection 5.07 (8). These changes allow for an alternative method of mounting fuel-dispensing devices.

The second regulatory change, originally filed as an emergency amendment to 527 CMR 13.00 (effective 1/10/

2000), permanently amends said section by adding a new definition, "Charge Activated Device" and adding a new subsection 13.99 (12) entitled "Charge Activated Hydraulic Device". These devices involve a new hydraulic blasting technology.

For assistance on interpreting the fire prevention regulations, please feel free to call the Code Compliance and Enforcement staff in the Office of the State Fire Marshal at (978) 567-3300. ♦

NEWS FROM CPSC

The following items are excerpts from press releases issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission regarding products recalled for fire or burn hazards. Consumers should stop using these products immediately and contact the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission or the manufacturer for instructions on how to proceed.



August 1, 2000, Release # 00-153

Recall of Gas Grills

The Coleman Co. of Wichita, Kan., is voluntarily recalling about 86,000 Coleman Gas grills. A sharp edge on the metal heat shield below the control panel of the grill can cause lacerations to the hands, wrists or arms. Coleman has received six reports from consumers who received cuts or lacerations on their hands, wrists, or arms from the heat shield when they were accessing the propane cylinder underneath the grill. The recalled grills are green and black and have a red Coleman emblem on the grill's cover. The grill has a wheeled cart with two side tables or one side table and a side burner, and features a warming rack above the grilling surface. Only grills with series numbers 2000 or 3000 are included in the recall. The series numbers are on the face plate of the grill, located on the right hand side of the control panel. Home improvement and discount department stores sold the grills nationwide from January through

April 2000 for between \$350 and \$500. Consumers should immediately contact Coleman toll free at (877) 846-1070 anytime to receive a free repair kit or visit the Coleman Grill web site at www.bbqhq.com/aboutus/recall.htm. The repair kit contains a plastic sheath to cover the sharp edge on the heat shield.

Williams-Sonoma Inc., of San Francisco, Calif., is voluntarily recalling about 950 portable propane gas grills, called the Suitcase Grill. The grills can be difficult or impossible to turn off and the temperature control can malfunction. This poses fire, burn, and explosion hazards to consumers.

Williams-Sonoma and CPSC have received two reports of consumers being unable to shut off the propane gas flow. No injuries have been reported.

The grill is made of rust-resistant stainless steel and folds like a suitcase, with built-in handles. It measures 23 inches long by 8 inches high. The grill has a 20,000-BTU propane-gas burner with adjustable temperature controls. The control is a black round knob with white writing that reads in part "HIGH, LOW, MED, OFF". A label on the grill reads "Model #15-3597291, READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE LIGHTING, and MADE IN CHINA." Williams-Sonoma stores, in addition to the Williams-Sonoma catalog and web site, sold the grills nationwide from March 2000 through July 2000 for about \$200.

Consumers should stop using the grills immediately, and return them to Williams-Sonoma for a full refund and a \$50 gift certificate. The firm will reimburse consumers for shipping, and will retrieve the grills from consumers' homes, upon request. For additional information, contact Williams-Sonoma toll free at (888) 779-5173 between 8

a.m. and 5 p.m. PT Monday through Saturday.



July 28, 2000, Release # 00-152

Recall of Propane Cylinders

AmeriGas Propane L.P., of Valley Forge, Pa., is recalling about 100 propane cylinders sold or exchanged at The Home Depot or Meijer's stores in the Detroit, Mich., area. Of these cylinders, about 10 could be overfilled, which can cause them to release flammable propane gas unexpectedly, posing a risk of fires and explosions. On July 19, 2000, some of the overfilled cylinders vented propane and ignited, causing an explosion at the AmeriGas plant in Willoughby, Ohio. One worker suffered minor burns. No consumer injuries have been reported. After investigating the source of the overfilled cylinders, AmeriGas determined the only AmeriGas office which delivered possibly overfilled cylinders to retail stores was its Trenton, Mich., office. No other AmeriGas location released overfilled cylinders to retailers or customers.

Home Depots and Meijer's stores in

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the Detroit, Mich., area sold or exchanged these propane cylinders on July 17 through July 19. An AmeriGas "Prefilled Propane Xchange" or "PPX"® gas grill cylinder is white, and at the time of purchase, had a shrink-wrapped sleeve around it with the names "AmeriGas" and "PPX" on it. The cylinders sold for between \$44 and \$48 and cost between \$13 and \$14 for an exchange.



July 20, 2000, Release # 00-145b

Recall of Oil Burning Candles

Target Corp., of Minneapolis, Minn., is voluntarily recalling about 16,000 glass and metal oil burning candles. The candles come in two shapes: rectangular and circular. The glass on these candles can shatter, creating a fire hazard. The glass portion of the candle is supported by a black metal frame. There are two glass pieces that stack on top of each other. The lower glass piece has a reservoir for oil. The top glass piece has an opening for a wick. The circular candle measures 6.25 inches in diameter and the rectangular candle measures 5.5 inches by 13.5 inches. These candles were made in China. Target stores sold these candles nationwide from January 2000 through May 2000. The circular candles sold for \$8 and the rectangular candles sold for \$15.

July 11, 2000, Release # 00-142

Recall of Toaster Ovens

Appliance Co. of America, of Great Neck, N.Y., is recalling about 7,000

Welbilt toaster ovens. The ovens' heating elements can break, causing the glass door to shatter. The toasters could short circuit, causing electrical shocks and fires. Appliance Co. of America has received 14 reports of heating elements breaking.



In one incident, the glass door broke, and in another, a countertop was scorched. No injuries have been reported. These Welbilt toaster ovens with rotisserie and griddle have model number TR660 on the back of the oven. The oven is white and black about 17 inches wide and 12 inches high, and has a glass door. Three knobs on the right side of the oven control the temperature; function, such as broil, rotisserie, toast and bake; and length of time. "WELBILT® Toaster Oven With Rotisserie & Griddle" is written on the oven's lower-right front. Club, discount and department stores, and mail order catalogs sold the toaster ovens nationwide from January 2000 through May 2000 for about \$100.

July 6, 2000, Release # 00-141

Recall of Elmo Nitelights

The First Years Inc., of Avon, Mass., is voluntarily recalling about 123,000 "Elmo Nitelights." The faceplate on these nightlights can be broken off, exposing wiring and posing shock and electrocution hazards. CPSC and The First Years have received three reports of the faceplates on these nightlights breaking off resulting in



two 1-year-old girls and an adult receiving an electrical shock when touching the exposed wires. The "Elmo Nitelight" shows the Sesame Street character Elmo, who is red, hanging onto a green lamp post set on a blue background. A moon and stars surround the light part of the lamp post, which illuminates when the light is plugged in. It measures 4.25 inches long by 2.75 inches wide and fits over the entire standard outlet coverplate. "Henson" and "the first years" are imprinted on the back of the nightlights. The cardboard packaging shows a picture of the Sesame Street character Big Bird, and includes the writing, "SESAME STREET" and "nitelight." Discount, drug, grocery and toy stores sold these nightlights from July 1997 through March 2000 for between \$5 and \$6.

June 27, 2000, Release # 00-131

Recall of Light Boxes

Apollo Presentation Products, of Ronkonkoma, N.Y., is voluntarily recalling about 30,000 portable light boxes, used to view film, slides and

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transparencies. The light boxes have loose wires and lack adequate



grounding, presenting fire, electrocution and shock hazards to consumers. CPSC has received two reports of loose wires, one in which the light box caught fire, resulting in \$5,000 property damage. No injuries have been reported. The recalled Apollo light boxes are models LB100, LB101, LB102 and LB110. The model number is located on a sticker affixed to the unit's side. The sticker also reads in part, "Portable Light Box...CSA." The light box consists of a white metal box, containing a fluorescent light, and a Plexiglas viewing plate that slides into two black metal guides on top of the metal box. The light box has a folding handle and tilt stand, and it can be wall mounted. The light boxes were sold in a box labeled in part, "APOLLO PRESENTATION PRODUCTS, GLOWPRO PORTABLE LIGHT BOX, Made in China." A photo of the product and the model number are on the box. Office supply stores nationwide sold the light boxes from June 1997 through April 2000 for \$66 to \$115.

June 27, 2000, Release # 00-132

Recall of Hedge Trimmers & Augers

Tanaka America, of Auburn, Wash., is voluntarily recalling about 7,500 hedge trimmers and 1,400 augers. The fuel

tank vents on these products can leak, posing a fire hazard.

Tanaka and CPSC have received one report of a hedge trimmer catching fire and causing minor damage. No injuries have been reported. The products are orange with black handles and have "Tanaka" and the model number printed on the recoil starter cover. The serial number is located on a label on the side of the engine.



The model and serial number ranges are:

HEDGE TRIMMERS

Model No.	Serial No. Range
THT-2100	T245721 - U2064452
THT-2120	T218561 - U202762
THT-2510	T246071 - U154280
THT-2520	T218761 - U154380
THT-2540	T260826 - U190886

AUGER

Model No.	Serial No. Range
TIA-340	T236911 - V067500

Lawn and garden stores and outdoor power equipment dealers sold the hedge trimmers and augers nationwide from September 1998 through September 1999. The hedge trimmers sold for about \$370 and the augers sold for about \$500.

Release # 00-115, May 25, 2000

CPSC, Universal Security Instruments Announce Recall of Smoke Alarms

Universal Security Instruments Inc., of Owings Mills, Md., is voluntarily recalling about 34,000 smoke alarms. The smoke alarms can fail to alarm when smoke or fire is present. A capacitor in the alarm can burn out, releasing smoke and melting the cover.

Universal has received three reports of alarms failing, releasing smoke. There has been one report of minor smoke damage to the wall of a mobile home. No injuries have been reported.

Consumers can identify the recalled models by removing the alarm cover from its base and looking for the manufacture date code and model number. The smoke alarms are made of white plastic and have the manufacture date code and model number imprinted on the back of the alarm.

Brand: Safe T Alert
Model#: SA-785
Desc.: AC unit only
Date Code: BCSR

Brand: Universal
Model#: SS-785
Desc.: AC unit only
Date Code: BCSR

Brand: Universal
Model#: SS-795
Desc.: AC/DC unit w/ battery backup
Date Code: BESS

Brand: USI Electric
Model#: USI-1203
Desc.: AC/DC unit w/ battery backup
Date Code: BESS

Some alarms do not have the brand name printed on the unit. Consumers should look at the model number to determine if it is a recalled alarm.

Electrical distributors, housing suppliers, and hardware stores sold these smoke alarms nationwide from April 1998 through June 1999 for between \$10 and \$15. Most of these smoke

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alarms were pre-installed in homes during construction.

June 26, 2000, Release # 00-129

New Labels on Children's Sleepwear Alert Parents to Fire Dangers

Prevent burn injuries by wearing snug-fitting or flame-resistant garments

To prevent burn injuries, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) urges parents to make sure their children's sleepwear is either flame-resistant or snug-fitting. Loose-fitting T-shirts and other loose-fitting clothing made of cotton or cotton blends should not be used for children's sleepwear. These garments can catch fire easily, burn rapidly, and are associated with nearly 300 emergency-room-treated burn injuries to children each year. Children are most at risk from burn injuries that result from playing with fire (matches, lighters, candles, burners on stoves) just before bedtime and just after rising in the morning. As of June 28, 2000, CPSC will require hangtags and permanent labels on snug-fitting children's sleepwear, made of cotton or cotton blends, to remind consumers that because the garment is not flame-resistant, it must fit snugly for safety. The new yellow hangtag for snug-fitting garments says: "For child's safety, garment should fit snugly. This garment is not flame resistant. Loose-fitting garment is more likely to catch fire." The permanent label says "Wear snug-fitting. Not flame resistant" and is sewn into the neck of the garment. Parents should look for tags that say the garment is flame-resistant or snug-fitting. Flame-resistant garments are made from inherently flame-resistant fabrics or are treated with flame retardants and do not continue to burn when removed from a small flame. Snug-fitting sleepwear is made of stretchy cotton or cotton blends that fit

closely against a child's body. Snug-fitting sleepwear is less likely than loose T-shirts to come into contact with a flame and does not ignite as easily or burn as rapidly because there is little air under the garment to feed a fire. CPSC Vice Chairman Thomas Moore said, "It's safer to put your children in flame-resistant or snug-fitting sleepwear, not in other types of loose-fitting cotton or cotton-blend garments." Describing the new CPSC labels, Moore added, "Look for the new yellow hangtags. They tell you that the garment should fit snugly and they warn that a loose-fitting garment is more likely to catch fire." CPSC sets national safety standards for children's sleepwear flammability. These standards protect children from serious burn injuries if they come in contact with a small flame. Under federal safety rules, garments sold as children's sleepwear for sizes larger than nine months must be either flame-resistant or snug-fitting.

June 7, 2000, Release # 00-119

Recall of Children's Robes

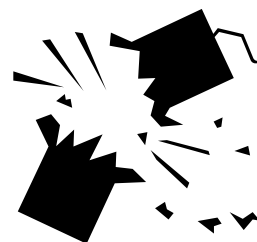
Federated Department Stores Inc., of Cincinnati, Ohio, is recalling up to 50,000 children's robes purchased for use as sleepwear. These robes, when used as sleepwear, fail to meet federal flammability standards for children's sleepwear. The standards require sleepwear, including robes, to be flame resistant, and if the garment ignites, the flame must self-extinguish. Failure to meet the flammability standards presents a risk of serious burn injuries to children. Federated Department Stores has not received any reports of injuries from these robes. This recall is being conducted to prevent the possibility of injury. The recalled robes are made of 100 percent cotton terry cloth sold under the brand names Aegean, Baby Monarch, b kids, Charter Club, Club Room, and Jr. By Monarch. The robes are a wrap style with waist belt, two front patch pockets and a hood. They

were sold in boys and girls sizes 12 months to 14 and in sizes small, medium, large and extra large. The robes come in a variety of colors and prints. The brand name, fabric content and size are on sewn-in on labels. The robes were sold at Bloomingdale's, Burdines, Goldsmith's, Lazarus, Macy's, Rich's, and The Bon Marché from July 1995 through January 2000 for about \$25 to \$52.

July 3, 2000, Release # 00-137

Two Las Vegas Fireworks Companies Fined \$90,000 for Banned Fireworks

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) announced today that Red Rock Trading Co. Inc. and Blackjack Fireworks Inc., both of Las Vegas, Nev., have agreed to pay a total civil penalty of \$90,000 to settle allegations that the firms violated both the Federal Hazardous Substances Act and the CPSC's Fireworks Regulations by importing banned fireworks. CPSC alleges that between December 14, 1994 and May 20, 1999, Red Rock/Blackjack illegally imported for sale approximately 730,000 banned fireworks devices for distribution in the U.S. The banned devices included reloadable shells, jumping jacks, mine and shell devices, bottle rockets, stick rockets, and sky rockets. The shipments that were found to violate CPSC's regulations were placed under U.S. Customs Bond and were not distributed for sale in the U.S. Banned fireworks can kill or injure consumers by discharging unexpectedly or otherwise malfunctioning. For example, if a firework's fuse burn time is too short, the device can ignite before a consumer lighting it has



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Blasting Incidents on the Rise!

*Todd Harrington, Explosives Safety Manager
Office of the State Fire Marshal*

Since early in 1999 it seems as though there has been a steady increase in blasting incidents. Maybe the most troubling aspect of many of these incidents is that they are occurring with experienced blasters and well established companies. Code Compliance and Enforcement Officers have been particularly busy in the last 7 – 8 months with a number of fairly serious incidents. Two incidents are under investigation where personal injuries occurred as a result of flying rock or debris. Clearly this is the worst case scenario when someone is injured by flying debris from a blasting operation. There have also been several other very close calls where flyrock incidents have come dangerously close to causing injuries. On top of these situations are incidents where explosives have either “fallen off” a delivery truck onto a busy street or have been “left” on a property owner’s front lawn. And there are others!

More than anything, the solution to the prevention of these types of incidents lies in the hands of the explosives industry. From a regulatory standpoint, a low tolerance for any type of carelessness is in order. The causes of these incidents are varied, but the common fact that seems to come out of a number of these investigations is that both blasters in the field and company managers are getting careless and sloppy. When investigations have dug deeper into what the contractors are doing, more problems beyond the original one are uncovered. With that thought in mind, it is fair to say that both the Certificates of Competency and Users’ Certificates being held by the contractor experience a high degree of exposure as a result of these types of incidents. Several of these certificates are now in jeopardy because of nothing more than being careless and sloppy.

So, one may ask, “What part does the

fire service play in changing this dangerous trend?” Well, as previously stated, the solution is in the hands of the explosives industry. They have to get themselves under control. The part that the fire service can play is “awareness”. Awareness of what the blasting contractor is proposing to do and awareness of how the contractor is conducting his blasting operation. Does his “plan” sound too aggressive for the location? Does the contractor have a plan at all? Does it sound like the contractor is trying to “move” too much rock in a short period of time? How does the contractor present himself? Does his blasting site appear organized? Is his paperwork in order? These are all possible warning flags that a contractor is getting sloppy or careless. The fire service can play an important role by recognizing those warning flags. It has been this writer’s observation that, “when things don’t look right, they usually aren’t”. Blasting tends to be a technical and “foreign” trade, but some of the most basic observations can give a clue to some bad habits on the part of the blasting contractor. In at least two instances where flyrock occurred, the firefighter on detail was not comfortable with how site security was being conducted and required people on or next to the site to be moved further from the blasting area. In these instances, injuries were clearly prevented by the awareness of the firefighter. A warning flag was raised, understood, and appropriate action was taken.

If the blasting detail does observe something that just doesn’t look right, it may be a signal that a closer look is in order for that blasting project. As always, the Office of the State Fire Marshal is available for assistance and consultation on these types of issues. Code Compliance Officers and the Explosives Safety Manager are always available for calls or site visits. Unfortunately, some “extra attention” may be necessary to prompt the explosives industry to get things heading in another direction from where they have been going recently. ♦

Blasting Damage Complaints – Update

*Todd Harrington, Explosives Safety Manager
Office of the State Fire Marshal*

An unfortunate by-product of the large amount of blasting taking place in the state, is the blasting damage complaint. As outlined in 527 CMR 13.00 the first steps in dealing with a blasting damage complaint take place at the local fire department. The property owner alleging damage fills out and signs the complaint form and then the blasting contractor is required to acknowledge the complaint by his signature and submittal of his blasting logs. These first few steps are very important to the overall process for dealing with complaints for both the local fire department and the Office of the State Fire Marshal to determine whether or not violations have occurred. This remains true, even though there is an on-going problem with complaints coming in well outside the timeframes required by the regulation.

Damage determination is not a function or responsibility that either the fire department or the Office of the State Fire Marshal needs to, or should, get involved in. However, we are interested in violations of the regulation. The three primary violations that can appear in a complaint investigation are flyrock, which will be obvious, air blast and vibration, and blasting log issues. While the airblast and vibration violations are not always easy to detect, blasting log violations can be fairly easy to spot. A quick scan of the log can be made for format and completeness. There are 18 items required by the regulation to be included on the log and most of those are fairly basic. Times, locations, quantities and distances are some of the basic data that should be part of the log. “Who did it,

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Blasting Detail Orientation Program - 527 CMR 13

This three hour seminar is designed for firefighters who will be taking assignments on blasting details. The seminar will be conducted by the Explosives Safety Manager of the Office of the State Fire Marshal and will cover the practical aspects of working on a blasting detail.

The following topics will be covered:

- Basic Blasting Terminology
- Commonly Used Explosive Materials
- Seismograph Set-Up Demonstration
- Blasting Detail Checklist Overview
- Overview of the “Boulder Buster”

Location	Course	Date	Time
DFS / MFA State Road Stow, Massachusetts	000825611 A	September 6	0900 –1200 hrs
DFS / MFA State Road Stow, Massachusetts	000825611 B	September 6	1800 –2100 hrs
Fitchburg Fire Dept. 33 North Street Fitchburg, MA	000825611 C	October 4	1800 – 2100 hrs
Tewksbury Police Dept. 918 Main Street Tewksbury, MA	000825611 D	October 18	0900 – 1200 hrs
Natick Public Safety Training Center 20 East Central Street Natick, MA	000825611 E	October 25	0900 – 1200 hrs

*Students should park and enter the training area in the rear of the building

Please use the standard MFA application

Applications can be faxed to the Academy at (978) 567-3229 ♦

Blasting Damage Complaints – Update

when and where it was done, how much was used and what were the results” are the basic questions that the blaster should be answering.

As a whole, the blasting industry is becoming somewhat sloppy and careless. From a blasting log stand point, one of the finest examples of this is in the form of a series of logs which were sent in that were associated with a blasting damage complaint. Several of these logs were void of critical data. However, these same logs did have some very detailed “cartoons” - yes cartoons - sketches of where the blast site should have been. One of the most basic elements of a blasting operation is good record keeping and what is showing up during investigations of blasting incidents could be termed nothing other than neglectful and lax as demonstrated by the “cartoon logs”. The focus of this article is really centered on the initial review of the blasting complaint. Making the request for blasting logs from the blasting contractor will enable both the fire

department and the Office of the State Fire Marshal the opportunity to review and issue

a Notice of Violation if one of the most basic steps of the blasting operation is not in order.

With the current high blasting incident rate that exists in Massachusetts, there should be a very low tolerance for any violation of the regulation. Sloppy record keeping is a good indicator of problems in other areas. Additional help that can be provided to the Office of the State Fire Marshal is in the form of the complaint “package” itself when it is forwarded to our office. Attaching logs that are in question or violation, or making notation that logs have been reviewed and that no violations have been found would be very helpful to us.

As always, the Office of the State Fire Marshal is available for assistance and



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consultation on these types of issues and will be glad to assist in the review of blasting log data. Code Compliance Officers and the Explosives Safety Manager are always available for calls or site visits. ♦

Self-Extinguishing Cigarette Legislation

After decades of no action at the federal level on self-extinguishing cigarette legislation filed year after year, New York state has finally passed a law requiring self-extinguishing cigarettes starting in 2003. California has similar legislation under consideration. In Massachusetts, the Senate Post Audit and Oversight Committee, headed by Senator Cheryl Jacques (D-Needham) will be holding a public hearing to review the feasibility of establishing standards for self-extinguishing cigarettes in the Commonwealth. The hearing will be September 6, 2000 at 1 p.m. ♦

Summer Program

continued from page 1

well as the importance of teamwork and mutual respect. Whether directly involved with the campers or performing the many behind the scenes tasks, the commitment of the volunteers made this endeavor the success that it was. The fire departments who supported this project by selecting children to participate or by sending staff to serve as volunteers should be proud of their efforts to make a positive impact on the youth in their communities. The Department of Fire Services thanks you for supporting this program.

The Summer Program relies on the support of outside agencies and companies such as the Mass.-RI FAIR Plan, the Department of Corrections, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Shriner's Hospital for Crippled Children, Shaw's Food, U.S. Food, Polaroid, Campbell's, and Price Chopper. The sponsors helped by providing T-shirts, food, buses, film, buttons, and nurses. ♦



Above: State Police Hazardous Device Technicians Kastrinakis, Fahy and Nolan explain and demonstrate the dangers of fireworks.



Left: Tpr. Tim Bombard and Cedar demonstrate how an accelerant detection dog assists fire investigators in determining if a fire was intentionally set.

Photos on this page by
John Duguay.



Above: Children learn about the chemistry of fire - the basis for learning how to prevent fires, how to react appropriately to one, and how to put one out - from Capt. Barbara Stone, Hanover.



Above: Children learn about firefighters tools from FF Dwight Beebe, Shelburne Falls (l) and FF Paul Whitney, Holden (r).

Right: Future firefighters wear hardhats and two pairs of glove while learning to work together and getting hands on the job of hazardous materials technician.



MFIRS CORNER

v5 Trainings in Fall 2000

Fire Chiefs are encouraged to send their officers to the training and bring back the information to their departments. Materials will be made available for officers who have attended the training to instruct the members of their own departments. It is important for each fire department to have an opportunity to have this initial v5 training, so space is limited to a

maximum of three participants per fire department. Registration for the v5 trainings will be handled by the MFA using the standard application form and Course # of 0039613. Each training seminar uses the same course # but has a different session letter. If you have questions regarding registration please call MFA Registration at

(978) 567-3201. All other MFIRS questions should be directed to Jennifer Mieth at (978) 567-3381.

The following v5 training dates have been scheduled by the Department of Fire Services:

Session	Date	Time	Location	Street Address	City
Session I	9/28/00	0830-1230	@DFS/MFA	State Road	Stow
Session X	9/30/00	0830-1230	@DFS/MFA	State Road	Stow
Session H	10/4/00	1830-2230	@DFS/MFA	State Road	Stow
Session J	10/6/00	0800-1200	@Middleboro Elks	High Street	Middleboro
Session L	10/11/00	1830-2230	@Northampton FD	26 Carlon Drive	Northampton
Session M	10/13/00	1200-1600	@Springfield FD Training Center	100 Grochmal Avenue	Springfield
Session Z	10/17/00	0900-1300	@Andover FD	32 North Main Street	Andover
Session N	10/18/00	0900-1300	@Fitchburg FD	33 North Street	Fitchburg
Session P	10/25/00	1830-2230	@Dalton FD	20 Flansburg Avenue	Dalton
Session S	11/8/00	0800-1200	@Foxboro FD/ Town Hall	40 South Street	Foxboro
Session U	11/18/00	0800-1200	@Springfield FD Training Center	100 Grochmal Avenue	Springfield
Session Y	11/21/00	0900-1300	@New Bedford Buttonwood Zoo	425 Hawthorne Street	New Bedford
Session V	12/9/00	0900-1300	Centerville-Osterville Marstons Mills Fire Headquarters	1875 Route 28	Centerville

2000 Data Collection

Mid-year reports of incidents reported to MFIRS 2000 were sent out the last week of July with a report of the number of fires by situation for each month, January through June. If your fire department has had reportable fires and you have not submitted reports for these incidents, please do so at your earliest convenience. The deadline for 2000 incidents to be reported to MFIRS will be February 16, 2001. It is important to remember that the quality control of the data takes some

time to allow for corrections to be made once the database is closed. Since we will be converting to version 5 on January 1, 2001, and it will be a major change, the sooner fire departments wrap up their 2000 reports in the version IV, the easier the transition will be. It would be extremely difficult for fire departments to have two systems of incident reporting active at the same time.

Electronic Data Due Monthly

As a reminder, all fire departments submitting data electronically are expected to submit data on a MONTHLY basis.

New MFIRS E-mail Address

If you submit your MFIRS reports by e-mail, please use the following e-mail address:
MFIRS.Report@state.ma.us

1999 Statistics Unveiled

The 1999 Annual Report of the State Fire Marshal is currently being edited and will be printed shortly. Until that resource is available for release, here is a sneak preview of the 1999 fire statistics.

9 Firefighters Died in the Line of Duty: 6 Lost from Worcester

In 1999, nine Massachusetts firefighters died in the line of duty. Eight of these firefighters died while fighting fires or from fire-related causes or exposure to fire products. This year begins the first year that all firefighter line-of-duty deaths will be included in the annual report.

10,595 Structure Fires, 6,011 Vehicle Fires, 12,370 Other Fires in 1999

There were 28,976 fire and explosion incidents reported by fire departments to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) in 1999. The 10,595 structure fires, 6,011 motor vehicle fires, and 12,370 outside and other fires caused 53 civilian deaths, eight firefighter deaths, 599 civilian injuries, 1,185 fire service injuries, and an estimated dollar loss of \$186 million in property damages. In 1999 there were two civilian deaths for every 1,000 fires.

Fires Up in 1999

The total number of reported fires increased by 12% from 28,873 in 1998 to 25,976 in 1999. Structure fires fell 1% from 1998 to 1999. From 1998 to 1999, motor vehicle fires went up 8%. Outside, brush, and other fires were up by 28% during the same time period. The increase in the total number of fires is due to increased reporting of outside or other fires. Although the law states that only fires where a loss is sustained must be reported, many fire departments are wisely reporting all of the fire incidents that they respond to,

giving a more accurate picture of the fire problem in Massachusetts.

Record Low Civilian Fire Deaths in 1999

Civilian deaths in all types of fires fell 10% from 59 in 1998 to 53 in 1999. Twenty-eight men, 19 women, and six children died in Massachusetts fires. Of the 53 civilian deaths in fires in 1999, 41 occurred in residential structure fires. Over three-quarters of civilians died in the "safety" of their own homes. Four deaths occurred in vehicle fires in 1999. Six people died in four outside and other fires in 1999.

Smoking and Cooking Tied as Leading Cause of Residential Fire Deaths

For years, smoking has been far and away the leading cause of fatal fires and fire deaths in Massachusetts, with no other cause coming close, until 1999, where cooking tied with smoking to be the leading cause of fire deaths. In 1999, the improper use and disposal of smoking materials caused ten fire deaths, six men and four women, in ten fatal fires. The unsafe and improper use of smoking materials caused 24% of residential structure fire deaths and 33%, or one-third, of fatal residential structure fires.

1/3 of Residential Fires Occurred in Homes With No Working Detectors

Unfortunately, in 32%, or about 1/3, of the residential structure fires, there were no working smoke detectors. No detectors were present at all in 11% of the residential structure fires. Detectors were present but failed to operate in 21%. The fire was too small to activate the detector in 7% of residential fires. Detectors operated in 61% of residential structure fires. These percentages were calculated for 6,979 fires where the detector performance was known.

Structure Arson Down 8%

Four thousand three hundred seven (4,307) Massachusetts fires were considered arson in 1999. The 886 structure arsons, 818 vehicle arsons, and 2,603 other arsons caused seven civilian deaths, 26 civilian injuries, 115 fire service injuries, and an estimated dollar loss of \$29 million. Structure arson fell by 6%. Motor vehicle fires rose 8% from 1998 to 1999, although since 1985, motor vehicle arson has fallen 84%. The steady decline of motor vehicle arsons can be explained by the enactment of the Burned Motor Vehicle Reporting Law, which took effect in 1987, and states that owners of burned vehicles must personally file a report at the fire station before they can collect on their fire insurance. ♦

Protecting Our Elders

The Executive Office of Public Safety, the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, the Mass. Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation will host a seminar on September 22, 2000 entitled *Protecting Our Elders*. The one-day seminar is designed to assist local communities in our efforts to protect and ensure the continued safety of our elder population. Police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical technicians are encouraged to attend along with Council on Aging members, elder service providers and caregivers. It will be held at Bunker Hill Community College in Boston, 8:45 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. There will be a series of morning and afternoon workshops, as well as featured speakers including Susan Wornick, mid-day co-anchor and consumer reporter at WCVB-TV, NewsCenter 5. There is an \$18 registration fee. Contact Nikki Cupples, Exec. Office of Public Safety at (617) 727-7775. ♦

FIRE AND LIFE SAFETY EDUCATION

2000 Public Fire and Life Safety Education Conference

Recipes for Success

The 6th Annual Massachusetts Fire and Life Safety Education Conference will be held on Monday, September 25, 2000 and Tuesday, September 26, 2000. The conference will be held at the Westford Regency Inn and Conference Center 219 Littleton Road, Westford MA. Call (978) 567-3380 for registration information. You can download the full conference brochure which contains the schedule of events, workshop descriptions, registration information and the nomination for the 6th Annual Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year at <http://www.magnet.state.ma.us/dfs/lifesafe/lifesafe.htm>.

Continuing Education Credits for EMTs and Teachers

The conference has been approved for 7 hours of OEMS credits on day 1 and 6 hours on day 2. Teachers may apply for PDPs with the conference attendance certificates which indicate the number of hours of training received each day.

New Flavors and Old Favorites

The two days of workshops are designed to bring back some core workshops for the new fire educator and to provide new workshops for the experienced life safety educator that exposes them to new programs or develops new skills. You will find some of each in the four "categories" workshops are divided into: Basic Ingredients, because all successful meals start with the basics; New Flavors, because a little spice keeps things interesting; Cooking Utensils, because the right tools get the job done efficiently; and Chef's Secrets, because we want the pros to share what the years have taught them. Some examples of

workshops include: Serving it Up or the ABCs of Classroom Management; Recipe for Disaster or Kids, Bombs and the Internet; Customer Service: Ingredients for Customer Satisfaction; Pitch, Power and Pace, the P Soup of Successful Presentation and Remembering When: A Fall and Fire Prevention Program for Older Adults.

Papa Gino's Underwrites Speaker on Effective Fire Station Tours

Papa Gino's restaurants, who for the past six years have sponsored open houses at fire stations during fire prevention week, have underwritten the appearance of Lt. Bill O'Neil from Marion County Fire District in Oregon. He is the author of *Engine Company Tours that Educate*. Papa Gino's agreed that this resource might help fire educators in Massachusetts with some new ideas when planning their open houses this fall.

Keynote Speaker: Denver Fire Chief Richard Gonzales

The keynote address on Monday, September 25 after lunch will be Denver Fire Chief Richard Gonzales. His presentation entitled *Do Too Many Ch(i)efs Spoil the Soup?* will focus on the history of the fire service, where it is going and the important roles life safety, education and customer service will play.

6th Annual Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year Award

Nominations for the 6th Annual Fire and Life Safety Educator of the Year are due September 6, 2000. The award will be given at lunch time on Tuesday, September 26, 2000 at the conference.

S.A.F.E. Program

FY 2000 End of Year Reports Overdue

The FY '00 end of year reports were due on July 31, 2000. So far only 75 of the 225 reports have been received.

FY 2001 Grant Application Process Underway

The Governor and the Legislature funded the Student Awareness of Fire Education Program for the sixth consecutive year. Grant applications were due from fire chiefs by August 18. The S.A.F.E. Advisory Board will have from August 25 - September 15 to review them. The goal the State Fire Marshal set for his staff is to enable the Secretary of Public Safety to make award determinations by Fire Prevention Week (October 8-14, 2000.)

Family Fire Safety Days Promote S.A.F.E.

Both the original family fire safety day at Houghton's Pond and the Western Mass. Family Fire Safety Day in conjunction with the New England Fire Chiefs' Conference, are designed to help local public fire educators promote the Student Awareness of Fire Education Program.

Upcoming: September 16

The Metropolitan District Commission and the Department of Fire Services invites everyone to attend the 5th Annual Family Fire Safety Day at Houghton's Pond, MDC Blue Hills Reservation in Milton, Mass. Saturday, September 16, 2000, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Family Fire Safety Day is a fun and educational family event designed to promote fire awareness through safety

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Family Fire Safety Days

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activities, displays, children's games, helicopter and fire engine demonstrations and tours. Antique and new fire engines will be on display. Sparky the Fire Dog® and Smokey Bear will be on hand to add to the festivities. Light fare and snacks will be on sale at the concession stand. The event is free to all. Bring the whole family and enjoy early fall at scenic Houghton's Pond.

Past Fun: Western Mass. Family Fire Safety Day

On Sunday, June 27, 2000 - one of the few hot sunny days of the summer - local S.A.F.E. Educators sponsored the Western Mass. Family Fire Safety Day. There was an outdoor display at the New England Fire Chief's Conference on the grounds of the Eastern States Exposition (a.k.a. The Big E.) Westwood S.A.F.E.rs brought their house on fire and since we had no water for children to pretend putting the fire out with, the S.A.F.E.rs made beanbags in the shape and color of water drops for the children to toss at the fire and "knock it down." Westfield Fire Dept. brought an intense static display of household items burned in fires and blown up photographs of a home after a fire. Holyoke Fire Dept. brought the local fire safety house and various S.A.F.E.rs from around the state conducted educational tours through it. Granby fire educators brought junior fire gear for youngsters to try on; and the DFS made paper plate smoke detectors. Everyone had fire safety literature to distribute along with red fire hats. The real reason for giving out little red fire hats is so that we can keep track of how many people stop by and we calculate that nearly 1,000 people did. The activities for the children gave fire educators an opportunity to discuss fire safety with the grown-ups. The longer the children were engaged in the activities, the longer the conversations with the grown-ups were ♦.



Photo by Sue Peltier

Left: Westwood FF Jonathan Cook teaches youngsters to "knock down fire."



Photo by Sue Peltier

Right: Western Mass. S.A.F.E. Coordinator Charlie Johnson gives a fire chief's hat to a future fire-fighter.



Photo by Sue Peltier

Left: Patches and his friend Lt. Bill Judd, South Hadley Fire District #1 make new friends and talk about fire safety.

time to get away. In agreeing to settle the matter, Red Rock and Blackjack deny CPSC's allegations.

June 28, 2000, Release # 00-130

Fireworks Press Conference on Mall in Washington

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) held a press conference today on the National Mall to demonstrate the dangers of sparklers and some illegal fireworks, including M-80s and salutes. Improper use of fireworks or use of illegal fireworks can result in deaths, blindings, amputations and severe burns. "Fireworks can add fun and excitement to a holiday celebration, but they can also turn a backyard celebration into a rush to the emergency room," said CPSC Chairman Ann Brown. In 1999, hospital emergency rooms treated about 8,500 people for fireworks-related injuries. About 45 percent of the victims were

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children under age 15. Injuries over the last 3 years, however, were lower than they had been in previous years - a decrease of about one-third since 1994. "Detonating these devices is best left to the professionals, because even fireworks that seem innocent can cause serious injury," said Brown. "For example, sparklers, that are often used by young children, burn at temperatures of 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit." As part of its fireworks enforcement program, CPSC prevents large numbers of hazardous fireworks from reaching consumers. Illegal mail order kits contain chemical mixtures that can explode unexpectedly and violently. M-80s, cherry bombs and quarter sticks are so highly explosive that they have been banned by Federal law since 1966. Working with the U.S. Customs Service since 1988, CPSC has seized or detained more than 400 million hazardous fireworks at docks across the country. CPSC advises consumers to leave fireworks to the professionals. ♦

Heating Water in the Microwave

Water alone should never be heated in the microwave. Something should be placed in the cup, such as a wooden stir stick or spoon or a tea bag, to diffuse the energy. We recently received information about an incident where a man heated water in a cup in the microwave. When he removed the cup from the microwave oven he noticed that the water was not boiling, but instantly all the water "blew up" into his face. The cup remained in his hand, but all the water had flown into his face due to the build up of energy. The trauma physician who treated him confirmed that this is a fairly common occurrence. We checked with the staff at Shriner's Burn Hospital in Boston and they too confirmed that this is a known hazard. ♦



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